

TO THE LOST FRIEND

AUGUSTE ANGELLIER



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TO THE LOST FRIEND

A Sonnet-Sequence

From the French of

AUGUSTE ANGELLIER

BY

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AND

CHARLES R. MURPHY

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PREFATORY NOTE

The one hundred sonnets in this little book are translations from a volume of Auguste Angellier, entitled *A L'AMIE PERDUE*. The translators have endeavored to make a selection from the original sonnet sequence that will in no wise break the slender thread of the story.

The free riming scheme, as shown in the original French, has been followed to a large extent, so that neither Shakespearean, nor the Italian form of sonnet, has been strictly adhered to.

AMISSÆ AMICÆ

IT was the time when buds on chestnut trees
Opened against the April's gusty sky;
Violets were for sale to passers-by
In the bright streets, perfuming every breeze,
When first I saw her face—then across these
Somber, entangled flow'rs I read the cry
From out her heart her proud lips would deny,
And in her eyes saw long despair of peace.
At that my pity for the sad Unknown
Broke trembling into bloom; and as I loved,
The summer opened into perfect flower;
The first full roses fell as in a shower,
And to the May sky, deep, blue, and unmoved
The chestnut trees held blossoms fully blown.

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Opened against the April's gusty sky;
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In the bright streets, perfuming every breeze,
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WHENCE came to narrow streets 'neath
narrow skies
Of this dull town set in a barren place,
The power and the beauty of her eyes
And brow, like some clear carven Roman face?
She should be moving, quiet and alone,
In clinging robes, her pale brow bound with
green,
Among a white-robed train, across the stone
Of Temples where dwell goddesses serene. . . .
What strange mad tides and wanderings of the
races
Have borne her here, across wide times and
spaces
Among a puny people, whose pale faces
Surround this flower with strength and pure-
ness fraught,
And here to brick-built city-streets have
brought
A marble fragment exquisitely wrought?

AMONG the many eyes that seek her own
What hope have I that my humility
Can draw her thoughts from purer things to
me,
And make her gaze a space on me alone?
This speechless love of mine she will not guess,
But it shall follow her untiringly,
Even till age has wither'd all of me,
Patient and taciturn and comfortless.
Nor is that all the pain I must receive;
For I am preyed upon by gnawing dread
Lest, in the end, not knowing how I grieve,
She let some other hand rest on her head
And to some other heart lay bare her heart—
The while in silence still I must depart.

I BRAVE the efforts of thy cruel wrath
O love, thou tyrant of the human breast!
My blood will flow upon the thorny path
As I mount higher in life's stern behest,
My lips will keep their secret still untold
When my feet make red the higher rocky way,
My heart will beat with gladness, proud and bold,
Though one last mortal wound thou should'st
essay!
Thy hounds of torment press me hard, and yet
The smile shall gleam upon my tortured face,
I know my soul endowed with God-sent grace;
The strength to suffer greater than thy pain,
The power of hoping stronger than thy threat,
The will to love, in hopeless hope, in vain!

WHEN the stars of the Great Bear rise o'er
the roof
Of the somber garden, and in the silent town
One hears the great bell tolling, sad, aloof,
At peace by the open window I sink down.
It is the hour when thou art near to me.
The glare and clamors of the day confuse
My prayer that my closed eyes thy face may
see,
Thy face, twilit, revealed 'neath swathings loose
Of some ethereal, purple, twilight veil,
In whose mysterious folds the stars shine pale;
Thy face, that wears as a clear silver light
A look of tender calm. From out the night
Sometimes the nightingales are heard; and so
I wait till thou art lost in white star-glow.

OUR eyes alone have mutely told the tale
Of love newborn, of hidden joys and
fears;

Thine eyes to mine their sadnesses unveil,
I see the long heartbreak, divine the tears,
And know the tenderness in dusks that sweep
Sometimes across their dreamy pools of light.
My eyes tell of the vigils that I keep
Before thine imaged face so proud and white—
So that, by now, a spirit-love is spun
From soul to soul, in meetings of our eyes,
And when we meet amid the throng, then run
Our hearts to one another with sweet cries—
As some lone lighthouse to a distant one
Speaks with its light across the seas and skies.

II

THE eyes caress more sweetly than the lips,
They open doors and windows of the
heart

Whence rare secret after secret slips,
Murmurous of beauty, hidden and apart.
The purest kisses are too fierce and gross.
The eyes speak with a power beyond mere
words;

They only can express the grieving, close,
True thoughts that come and pass, as swift
as birds.

When age has traced the mouth with bitterness

And saddened, too, the smile, the eyes still keep
Their beauty clear, made to console, to weep,
Endowed with love and with all tenderness.
What kiss can be diviner, through the years,
Than the beloved's eyes that fill with tears?

III

WHEN I shall clasp her under the rose-bower,
On you I wish that my first kiss may fall,
Dearly belovèd eyes, whose speaking power
First made my soul respond to her soul's call.
I wish that you may feel on closèd lids
The first-dews of the dawning of my love,
You sources of the dawn-fire that now bids
Me dare the promise of my love to prove.
And that you may reopen with changed light
Dear eyes, and dreams of a new world's delight
By sweet assurance of a love long true,
Sweet eyes and sad, so my first kiss shall be
Set as a seal of all my love on you,
The love devoid of hope that came to me.

IV

AND when 'mid trembling clusters of the
rose,
On the lonely bench in the avenue
Where the long evenings linger to a close,
She lay against my breast, and then when you
Were hid beneath your lowered lids, dear eyes,
And seemed to wait the kiss that I had dreamed
Of pressing there, before her tears should rise ;
And when this moment drew anigh it seemed
That I forgot your vows, your agonies,
And how much you had wept, oh pitiful eyes,
And that I ought to consecrate you mine ;
E'en so my promise I forgot to keep,
And at her mouth's warm font of love divine
My longing lips drank thirstily and deep.

RESIGNED, sweet eyes to whom I was unjust,
On whom fell not the first long kiss of all
That there I left upon her lips, you must
Forgive me, you who gave love's first low call.
The memory of you is sovereign still,
Although my lips sought hers on that wild day,
And dearer than her lips are eyes that fill
With sweetness that her lips wish to unsay.
What kiss, despite its burning tenderness,
Can my heart frame that equals your caress?
Sometimes it is my heart that from you cries,
Sometimes I hold your wistfulness, dear eyes,
Here in my heart and breast—Oh, smile and
 bless
My hidden love with wordless, sweet replies.

A SYRINGA blooms in a dreamy garden-close,
Down a rough pathway where the grass is rank,
Near a moss-stainèd bench beneath the flank
Of an old wall where shadows deep repose.
A heavy, sickly, waxen flower it shows
And foliage of frail leaves, pale and lank.
For a short time when June glows on the bank
A powerful perfume from the blossom flows.
But not so dear the crimson-flowering rose
To me, for it was there that on a day
Her heart that had so long been folded close,
Fell open to the core, as flowers may;
So I revisit the dreamy garden and stay
To muse where the fragrant, pale syringa
grows.

I

O DAY that stands in all my life supreme,
Like a deep-stained window burning
there

Above the somber, shadowed transept bare—
A flower of amethyst and scarlet gleam.
When the impetuous hours have sunk to rest
Whose slow march tortures me with hateful
care,

O Portal, wide to Heaven's radiance blest,
You hold my soul enraptured from despair!
And as a pilgrim, wending his lone way
Along the gray and wind-swept highland plain,
Enters the sheltering church and seeks to pray
From weariness of heart, in low refrain,
Kneeling before the saintly image there;
So do I kneel to Memory in prayer.

II

AND there before me in that wondrous glass,
A radiant maid, clothed in purest white,
Was standing on the flower-enameled grass
Amid the beauty of a woodland site;
Across the tender meadow, where she stood,
A little brook of clearest tone did ring;
A nightingale sang in the deeper wood;
Heaven was thoughtful with the new-born
spring.

And then I saw that maid lean kindly there
To one, who at her feet in silent prayer,
Did kiss her hands with deep humility.
And then I seemed to hear: " 'Tis thou; to
thee
She gives her hands with love's profoundest
grace!"
O highland winds, I greet your rough
embrace!

MY heart was marble set 'mid vine and thorn
That lay in a byway where the world
could see,

Where chance would carve a word, to be, in
scorn,

Removed by rains that washed it, ceaselessly.
But love, uprooting many a thorn and tare,
Threw them aside with a stern face and hand,
And slowly 'graved upon the surface bare
One name, cut deep and lasting as a brand.

Then all the place he fenced with chain and
rope;

At the four corners statutes he set out,
Marble within, but clad with bronze about—
They were: Proud Pardon, Memory, and
Hope,

And Loyalty—like sentinels of Kings
Guarding throughout all time eternal things.

THY mouth, so long a rebel to my love,
Received my kiss without returning one,
Surrendered not, unwilling, neither strove
Against my mastery that quickly won.
And while thy looks like clear brook-waters
gave

A shadow of thy shy confession, yet
The kisses paused upon thy lips so grave,
Trembled, and fell not, though our lips had
met.

At last, in one short moment, glad and swift,
When thy soul had forgot its stern-set law
And leaned in pity and in wondering awe,
Thy lips at length to mine thou didst uplift
And gave the kiss that was thy heart's first
gift—

But deeper sadness in thine eyes I saw.

WHEN thy first kiss I felt upon my brow
Pride leapt within me and a flame of
bliss

Like the long ray, that suddenly aglow,
On the dark mountain tops falls as a kiss
Of light and breaks the band of somber cloud.
My brow deserved thy touch being free of
stain,

And I have kept quite pure and clear and
proud

The dear place where thy lips have sweetly
lain.

When thy first kiss upon my lips I felt
There was no triumph ringing in my heart,
The hot blood did not surge, nor my heart
melt;

I stood confused and humble, pale, distraught,
Feeling, beneath this kiss, sacredly pressed,
The scorching shame that other kisses brought.

WITHIN the little forest that had grown
Upon the hill, you gave your hands to
me;

But spring already claimed it as his own—
Flung wide his door from which we seemed
to see

A rioting race of birds and leaves and flowers
Over the ancient moss-grown trunks to poise
And fall from there pell mell in scattering
showers,

Excited by the cuckoo's lusty noise.

The trees were interlaced with new-born gird
Of leaves that burst from limbs so lately bare;
Beneath this roof of verdure, thrice we heard
A voice that cried through the sweet-scented
air:

“To-day may all from Love no more refrain,
And those who have loved, let them love again!”

WHITE rose-tree! you whose tangled,
twisted spray

Climbs up to meet the iron balcony,
Twines on its rounded bars, there to display
Your curling leafy tendrils wantonly;
White rose-tree! you who bear such waxen
flowers

As grace a snowy altar, candle-wise
In the white month of virgins; or in showers
Bestrew a tomb wherein a sweet maid lies—
White rose-tree! hide, oh hide the blood-red
rose

The only one, that my torn hand stained red
With blood, as I drew from that last and close
Embrace upon the balcony, where late
I clung in the supreme farewell—then fled
From her whom, secretly, I won from Fate.

THE light of heaven is colored like a frail
And wearied turtle-dove at dying day;
And heavy lilacs fill the misty vale
And bats have now commenced their evening
play;
A nightingale is singing in the wood,
The eve has scattered its sweet scent around,
The dew has sown with pearls the leafy hood;
The leaves above, the flowers on the ground,
The moss upon the gnarled trunks of trees,
Shine forth in strange and delicate relief
Where flow the unearthly, brooding reveries
Of a bird that murmurs its eternal grief.
Come, lend the wood thy magic grace, and
show
Thine eyes of blue beneath the moon's soft
glow!

THE little house close by the murmuring
stream,
Where we did pass two months so sadly sweet,
Dost thou recall? How fair the Spring did
gleam
On the soft lawn that spread about its feet!
Out from the terrace, with its girdling stone
And vase of palest blue, we saw in flight
The rolling fields recede in shimmering light;
Near by the stream sang out its monotone.
But then we had to part; I still can see
The water's blush as early rays shone o'er
The calm of its untroubled purity,
The little boat that softly from thee sped,
The farewell that thou madest from the shore,
Where rose-trees grew, one white, the other red.

MAY this sonnet be like the galleys of old,
Resplendent with their load of ornament,
Where, beneath a tent of silken gold,
The queen reclines in royal abandonment.
May its gorgeous words like banners float
Above, triumphant in the restless air;
Let the charmèd voice and lingering note
Of lute and cymbal echo proudly there;
And may this ship of state move o'er the sea,
The sea aglimmer with its silvery sheen;
May the soft winds still blow in amity
Upon its sails of changing argentine;
Thy name it carries on in singing rime
O'er the uncharted space of fleeting time.

O SCULPTOR, look thou well at this dear
face,

To catch the beauty of its spacious brow
So pure, the beauty of these eyes, the grace
Of feature that appears divine! And now
Look thou again, O Sculptor, and surprise
The proud disdain of these chaste lips, the
light

Of love so warm from out these tender eyes.
Seek thou a block of marble, virgin-white;
See that thy chisel be as pure and bold,
As that of some deft Grecian man of old;
Keep thou thy heart now humble, lest, per-
chance,

Thy cunning be dismayed by puissant, still,
Soft beauty from this noble countenance;
For by my verse, the world shall judge thy
skill.

FROM the very first I knew how thy life's
way

Had led thee from our human joys apart
Where thou couldst gather, some less dreary
day,

Rarely, a hopeless hope to thy starved heart.
And that is why, poor hunted thing, I pray
My life may be for thee a place apart
From the hounds of grief; I would be balm to
stay

The bleeding and to soothe the tears that start.
O weary bird that flutters in the dark,
I would cherish thee, and heal the cruel mark
Of fear, and comfort thee that in the end
Thou shouldst forgive thy lot so drear and
gray.

I would make strength and tenderness to blend,
And Love a blessing on thy lonely way.

I

THOU wouldst be loved for thine own self alone—

The love, of pity born, thou dost declare,
Would soon be like a treasure that had grown
Too heavy for thy wounded soul to bear;
Thy haughty pride, so quickly put on guard,
Would wish that love should cherish, not relieve;

The equal, longed-for union would be marred,
If only one should give and not receive.

Yet it was Pity led my heart to thine;
Greater than thy beauty was thy grief,
And Pity led the way to tenderness.

My heart made plaint for thee; I did divine
The pain that in thine eyes cried for relief,
Before I loved thine eyes' own loveliness.

II

YES, Pity brought me to thee! I did see
 Her by the row of chestnut trees; the sun
Hung like a brazier burning steadily,
Beneath the wind-rock'd clouds with gold be-
 spun.

There softly luminous upon the hill
Where innumerable iris flowers grew,
She beckoned me to come, and paused until
I followed her soft mantle's changing hue.
By dark and wand'ring paths where met our
 glance

The sad white briar flower; above, obscure,
The sky took on its somber radiance;
Along the edge of marshes' dim expanse
Where the day's last glimmer did endure,
I followed her mysterious advance.

III

YES! Pity brought me to thee, even so,
Through night where trembled a lucidity
Shot with the silver dust of stars' soft glow,
Through night where blew the scent of dittany.
Short was the time to me; and when a blade
Of pearl and crystal, lighted in the sky,
Had chang'd to a far-gleaming rose-red shade,
Pity came in silence and stood nigh.
I saw thee in a lily-pattern'd field
Where honied roses gave their souls' sweet
yield;
But when I turned to see again, behold,
Love had driven Pity far away;
And then the heavens burst with streaming gold
And everywhere appeared triumphant day!

IV

AND while these rays fell, inexhaustible,
I saw, within that radiancy of sky,
These heavenly roses bloom, innumerable,
And blaze out like a beacon-fire's reply.
And as in some cathedral glass of old,
The Virgin seems, in glory standing there,
To see what worth a beggar's vow may hold,
You seemed to hear with kindness my deep
prayer;
The golden shower of light that did arise,
Gave place to tender light from out your eyes.
When Love revealed you to me in his bower,
Within his hands the somber iris lay
That Pity in her arms I saw display,
Mixed with rose-buds but partly come to
flower.

SEEK thou the calm of sleep upon my breast,
Dear wearied one, wistful and sorrowful;
And for thy heart I wish as deep a rest
And quiet as a lake where, in the lull
Of fierce pursuit the trembling deer seeks deep,
Safe shadow, while the hounds bay in the vale.
Sleep in my arms, the while in thy sweet sleep
All cruel memories may lose the trail,
Abandoning the prey they persecute.
But thou, forgetting all the fear and flight,
Shalt thank them for the sudden new delight
That would be hidden, save for their pursuit;
So shelter thee, forsaken, destitute,
Upon my breast from perils of the night.

HE who took thy life, made thee his own,
He says he loved thee; as though one
should tear

A hawthorn blossom, should a moment wear,
Then leave it trampled, by the wayside
thrown.

Wearied of his stage-love, he became
Fretful of thy purer soul and strove
By cruelty to punish thee for love.

We, being strong, must pity more than blame,
Since every wound he struck thy quivering
heart

Anguished his own in ways we do not know.
And it may even be that in the course
Of sunsets on far distant shores, there start
To life within his mind regrets that grow
And, unrelenting, darken to remorse.

MY well-beloved, hast thou seen, toward
night,

The crows regain the tall cathedral spires?
They seem to startle with their spiral flight
The last soft glow of day as it retires.
The shadows gather, and the moon, so faint,
Follows the dim inscriptions on the floor;
Again and again is heard their dreary plaint
In sudden lulls of restless wind's uproar.
But when, at the first rays of hast'ning dawn,
The joyous choir of bells is brought to life,
Their black-winged swarm in sluggish flight
is gone.

O morning bells, so full of playful strife,
Scatter the dark-winged, brooding agony
That sinks upon my heart so heavily!

THE owl said: "I am old; when long ago
I came, I found an anvil lying here,
And struck it with my beak, in sunrise glow,
Now smaller than a pebble it doth appear."

The deer said: "When I came an immense
wood

Stretched wide about, and every year there
came

An aged woodman; a single branch he would
Cut and take to feed his furnace flame;

A single tree its withered branch doth show."

And the proud eagle said: "Such age have I
The lofty hills by streams I saw brought low."

"Upon the shore my waves," the sea did cry,
Their minute gifts of salt so long have hurled
That man may load his ships for all the world."

II

THE lover cried: "Love in my heart is here
So strong, the owl a million times may
strike,

The sea its salt to towering cliffs uprear,
And love not feel the strain of toil alike;
The aged woodman then shall long have passed,
And weary years, proud eagle, blanched thy
wing,

And mighty peoples have forgot their past;
For love—the pause a swooning sleep may
bring.

The races shall have passed in war-like streams,
The epochs have destroyed, but to restore,
The ages ceased their long novitiate,
The moving world have come to that dim shore
Whose glory now the thoughtful see in dreams,
Before my love shall cede to Time, or Fate.

III

THE gnat to the poet spake: "Why boastest thou?

Shall thy love live on after thou art gone?

Thou measurest thy life's span between the dawn

And eve, and as the plant from seed doth grow.

Where are the frail nests when the tree lies low?

From broken lutes where has the music flown?

Where is the fragrance when the flower is blown?

And where the songs dead singers used to know?

Thy love is like thyself—a fragile thing.

When that the dreamers die, the dreams take wing!

His weapon lies by the fallen warrior brave.

Thou sayst Love shall even death withstand,

When thine own life is fugitive as sand

Obliterated by the wind and wave.

IV

AND the man cried: "This do I hold unjust!

O God-like dreams, is there no myrrh for thee,
To keep thee then forever when to dust
This heart of mine is brought by Death's decree?

I could accept the nothingness to be,
If death, with my own ruin, did not destroy
The lovely image that so silently
Has burned within the depths of all my joy.
If all must perish with us when we die,
Why then this love that reaches to the sky?
Who then has poured with such a clumsy hand
A wine so precious in a vase so frail,
And placed in hearts unstable as shifting sand
A thought that dies at sound of Death's first
hail?"

THE star then spoke, "When those bless'd
human hearts
That on earth knew love, have ceased to beat,
Death to them his fearful cold imparts—
Undaunted yet, their souls know not defeat;
For having defied the days of endless sorrow,
Eternal love within the breast of man
At last attains its long-awaited morrow
In distant realms beyond earth's farthest span.
In the vast concert of swift moving spheres
They are the notes of its eternal song;
They are the wistful ray of light that peers
From each star of that dim and heavenly
throng;
And that is why we see their lights so pale,
Like beating hearts behind a misty veil.

VI

THEN went the lover to the brooding sea,
To where his well-belovèd gaz'd far out
Over its calm and dim serenity,
There he told her of his bitter doubt,
And there he said how from the star had come
Peace to his soul, how some day must unfold
That should be for their love less burdensome,
So for the distant future his faith was bold.
But she, so wistful in the evening glow,
Sighed softly, "Though our love to us impart
Desire so long a trial to undergo,
I know a pledge more true and far above
All fear that lies about my quaking heart,
Promise to love me as long as I shall love."

SOMETIMES thou dost wish that I should depart,
To see if, like the workers on the shore,
I should see pass, nor let them move my heart,
The ships of Pleasure laden with rich store.
If, far from the smile of thy dear face,
My soul, thro' months of dark despair, should keep
Its grief, and in some sad and lonely place,
Inconsolable, go apart to weep ;
If, in sorrow, it should for naught else pray
But flowers of far-off hope and chill dismay,
The pale, wan asphodel and scabious drear ;
And should await in confidence, nor tire,
That vague and distant hour that brings thee near,
Thou shouldst know, then, what thou dost most desire.

IF mine was not the love that thou hadst
deemed,
If it failed to reach the summit of thy de-
sire,
If far below thy dearest wish it seemed,
Nor was a light to set thy days afire ;
If, failing to form horizon to thy vows,
In its immense encircling tenderness,
It shows a single opening that allows
To gleam a sky of fairer loveliness ;
Speak ! and I shall put this song aside
And shall depart by paths without return,
But taking with me, in this long sojourn,
The consolation and the solemn pride
Of having shown by this that my love here
Was worthy of the love that thou holdst dear.

I DID not know thee in thy tender years,
When the heart of youth was warm, and
thy
Pure, joyous laugh rang, with no thought of
tears,
Like a lark's clear song within a cloudless sky;
But I beheld that noble face of thine,
Grave as an antique cameo, and as pure,
With the soft light of thoughtful skies ashine;
And in my heart this image shall endure.
To thee shall come years where strange beauty
lies,
That life gives to those pensive ones that wear
Dim smiles within their sad, consoling eyes;
On thy maturèd face shall then repair
The calm that age alone may realize,
And, with thy whitened head, I'll deem thee
fair.

SOMETIMES, when first I loved thee, I did
muse:

“If I should die, would she not love again?
Can a young bird to try its wing refuse,
Or heart of youth forever be in chain?
Who then would blame her, if some glowing
May

Should lead her on to taste new ecstasy,
And she should hear its voice, nor disobey?”
I felt the hint of fear in revery.

But now I fear no more the dreaded Night:
Thou canst no longer love in my despite,
My patient love has caught thee in its spell,
And for eternity I conquered thee;
For in thy blood and brain and heart I dwell,
To keep thee safe from other mastery.

LOVE has led us to the open shore
Where, between severed lands the waters
flow.

A land of trial ours, with naught in store
Of beautiful, and where no flowers grow
Save evil thistles choked in the sands below,
And the tall willows trailing sadly o'er.
The land of Joy, with golden fruits aglow
Where fruits and flowers blossom evermore
Burns on our vision like a distant fire,
And to us on the wind its perfumes come.
But on the rocks our lives are captive, dumb;
And to the day of death we seek, and tire
In seeking sadly, hopelessly, for some
Deep-hidden way to the land of Heart's desire.

BY THE BLUE WATERS

A LITTLE bay where waves of softest blue
Stretch far upon the sands their fringe
of white,

And somber rocks of warmly reddish hue
Reach out long arms in the dull evening light;
A narrow street that can be dimly seen
Between its row of houses; and down there
A little forge that sends its ruddy sheen
Far out upon the dim and tranquil air;
Some boats that on their homeward courses lie,
With their pure white or saffron-tinted sails;
A sailor rowing wearily close by,
A warship steaming there far out at sea,
An island that is wreathed in purple veils;
Such is the scene where my heart pines for
thee.

AND now the misty sea has lost the sun,
Yet all the capes seem still to catch its
glow,
As they stretch forward 'cross the tide—but
slow
Their profiles now are fading, one by one;
The rocky island where dun shadows creep
Is glowing at its top with purple light;
And there, far out, two lonely sails of white
Are standing motionless; while gentle sleep
So stealthily in the dark air doth spread;
And fishermen row for the sheltered bay,
Where yet a window here and there burns red;
And you and I turn homeward silently,
With grieving hearts to see this lovely day
Slowly expire upon the listless sea.

BEYOND the dunes, an orange colored glow
Lights up the sky that still is clear and
pure;

But, toward the east, a twilight dim and slow,
Combines the rocks, the desert sands obscure,
The mighty dome of heaven, the sea's wide
plane,

Together in a strange, sublime accord,
A mystic harmony where now remain
All that day may claim and still belord.

Above the line of earth and sky appears
The silver moon, with palest tint of rose;
Her shimmering beams upon the waves repose,
Above, in the fast darkening sky, her sphere's
Light has turned to gold; o'er all does creep
A solemn quiet that seems eternal sleep.

HOW fair this land is, bathed in warm sun-showers,
With its rich light triumphantly aglow
From the clear silver of dawn's earliest hours
Till eve so swiftly into night does flow.
And yet my grieving heart, so wistfully,
Regrets and sighs for that dim duskiness
Where slowly day sinks down the paling sky,
Like a faint hope that dies of weariness.
And oh, the sadness of our plains' expanse!
When soft gray mists twine in among the trees,
And the dun light's uncertain radiance
Glows o'er the marshes' hidden mysteries,
And distantly beyond the roof's low edge
The moon's thin crescent lifts above the hedge.

I

THE old deserted garden was thick-strewn
With red-gold oranges and olives brown,
Citrons, and figs; one heard the ceaseless tune
Of shady waters and the dropping down
Of some ripe fruit, each moment; like a fire
Among dark leaves the pomegranates flamed;
The crawling grape vines pushed themselves
entire

Through open crevices where red walls framed
Warm, odorous clusters of a purple-blue,
Heavy and thick as though the ripe fruit drew
A velvet curtain o'er its own rich hoards;
In every hollow of the wall, turned towards
The piercing sunlight, the wild aloe grew
Whose long sharp branches cut the blue like
swords.

II

WE stayed here, resting in the silence deep,
In this dark recess curtained with the
light;

Above, a single cloud seemed slow to creep
In skies the emptier for its patch of white;
The mountains shimmered, tender, blue, asleep,
Clasping the fields about, while far and bright
The river wound, with many a curve and sweep,
In sumptuous folds, red-gold and silver-white.
The breeze died out; each moment, through the
sound

Of waterfalls, fell softly to the ground
Some heavy, ripened fruit in shady spot—
Suddenly, as a secret thought was born,
She asked me why this house and garden plot
So long had been deserted and forlorn.

III

I TOLD her then the story I had heard:
How long ago two lovers sought to share
Their sorrows in forbidden love, and spurr'd
To the supremest wisdom by despair,
Had come to this old garden, here to pluck
The sweet, late-blossomed flower of happiness
That wither'd not; for from themselves they
struck
The chains of life, that death might crown
and bless
Their ecstasy; refusing, thus, to face
A doom like ours they died in close embrace.
—But she, rising and shaking like a leaf,
Touching my lips, her manner darkly changed,
Whispered “Hush” in a voice that choked with
grief,
And stayed thus, silent, bitter, and estranged.

IN THE HILLS

IN the dim, age-old woods of beech and pine
That clothe the sides and summit of the hill
The gray beech trees endure the months that
still
Bring seasons in their wearisome design.
When on the hills, the Spring blows sweet and
keen
Their gnarled boughs are green; by winds
bereft
Of their red leaves in Autumn they are left
Like ancient priests, their feet incarnadine.
Only the stately pines are not made glad
By Spring, they keep their state, somber and
sure,
When snow-drifts all the forest paths obscure.
In the forest of my love sometimes are clad
With green my hopes—But darkening and sad
The deeper woods abide and shall endure.

HOW pale thou art: what sadness in thine eyes!

Such long sojourn within the city wall,
'Neath heavy skies that seem too loth to rise
From the belfry towers, swept by its leaden pall;

Days with sorrow hounding on their rear
Have bowed thy face, so dear to me, so pure,
On to thy hand grown thin and white and clear;

Thy weary eyes show what thou dost endure.
Come to the highlands and the supernal snow!
Come up where heaven is high and where the wind

Over the fields of eternal ice does blow
And riot, with healing breath, undisciplined;
Come, sweep away that load of all thine ills
In the friendly heart of the majestic hills!

AND we who but to life's swift hour attain,
O love, whose eyes are clear with light
divine,

Let us love now—the nearest hopes are vain—
And with forgetfulness the hour combine.

Hark! Dost thou hear that stone roll down
the pass?

Hasten! that our souls before they die
At least once reach the topmost snow-clad
mass,

Which rays of heavenly light now glorify!
We are like thistle-down by winds outspun,
Like snow-flakes, when a ray of mid-day sun
Strikes us, and we are brought to nothingness;
We have but an instant on the height to be,
Before we fall, and all that we possess,
A perfect moment's swift eternity.

COME, let us on and journey through the night!

Up through dim forests of never-fading pine,
Across the somber heath that flanks the height
Up to the lofty peak's most steep incline.

Mount higher! through the rocky wilderness,
O'er the sleeping fields of glacier ice and snow,
To conquer the last summit's awfulness

Before the dawn's first red begins to glow.

When, as soft veiling clouds are fast retreat-
ing,

The earth appears in its fresh purity

I wish, as dawn sends forth its joyous greet-
ing,

To kiss thy lips in deep humility,

Where light-touched mists in silvery beauty
lie

On those proud summits leaping toward the
sky!

OH, the sweet loveliness of this lost vale!
The days have passed like threads of
finest gold

Drawn from Time's distaff; as the eyes must
fail

Beholding skies too fiercely bright, so fold
Our spirits under joys we would unveil.
We had forgotten that bleak life of old,
And so the awakening made our glad hearts
quail

When first a crimson oak the end foretold.
We drew near home one evening and thy cry;
"The oak-leaves, see!" made clear the thought
that fills

Our eyes with tears. Then in the golden eve,
We took the red leaves, sadly, silently,
That told the end; and as one loth to leave
The sun died slowly from the distant hills.

WHEN our last day together came, we
dined

At the quaint Inn whose terrace by the lake
Hears only breaking waves and murmuring
wind

Droning the wash of pebbles in their wake.
Heavy and overblown the sunflowers pined
And wither'd on the stalk; as though to make
A shelter for the arbor, wild grapes twined
Shading us from the swollen, crimson sun,
The brazen sky and land; while one by one,
Beyond the hills, marshalled the clouds apace.
But we talked on of love and how love cleaves
To life; sighs broke our speech, and all the
place

Wherein we sat was strewn with wither'd leaves.

THE QUARREL

MY words have wounded you, full well
I've known,

Words of cruel passion, hateful, bleak,
Uttered by lips for so long seal'd thine own,
Words that I'd give my heart's blood to unspeak.

You stood amazed, and then your sole reply
Was one quick flash of anger that gave way
To sorrow; quickly, with a broken sigh,
You turned and left me there in chill dismay.
On the day marked for us to meet anew
I came; no hope within me dar'd arise
To find you in the leafy avenue.
But, clothed in sunlight that in summer skies
Had pierced the gathering clouds of somber
hue,

You waited there with pardon in your eyes.

STRANGE mottled sky of palest green and
black,

Thy changing mystery of evening light
Is like my heart, too feeble to attack
And dispel my sorrow's threatening night.
Between long curtains of the silent eve
Thy light gleams like the dim-illumined door
Of some dark mansion waiting to receive
Heart-weary travelers from a distant shore.
O brooding sky, grieving like my heart,
What will night bring thee for to-morrow's
morn,
The golden ray? or that where sorrow is born?
O yearning soul, like the lights that impart,
To this tender heaven their wistful grace
What will the dawn bring for thy sad embrace?

DOST thou recall, O thou who wert mine own,
The little cottage hid beneath tall elms,
From where we saw the dim church spires alone
Of hamlets that the billowing plain o'erwhelms?
And sometimes dost thou see the garden close,
With its trellised honeysuckle vine,
Where, each eve, as nature sought repose,
We watched the light from swarthy skies de-
cline?

Dost thou recall, beneath these flowering eaves,
Those whispered thoughts of ours, that tender
pledge,
That long embrace, to dreaming reverie lulled,
As the moon above the low, encircling hedge
Showed her face of gold through dusky leaves?
Those far-off days my yearning heart has
culled!

SOMETIMES my work, in study's silence,
In which I sought forgetfulness of pain,
Lifts me, from out my dark uneasiness,
Up to the ice-capped summit of Disdain.
In gazing from this lofty solitude,
My passions far below I seem to see,
And think to freely live with force renewed,
On this airy peak of crystal purity.
But, as a climber, standing by the height
Whose sides rise glittering from the dark
ravine,
Is dizzy from the play of shimmering light,
So, on my highland, glacial and serene,
My soul is faint with yearning to depart,
And feel the nearness of a human heart.

AT the poignant hour of twilight, in the
gray

Of eve, when homing flocks of curlews strew
The sky, and pools a clear expanse display,
Pensive, I draw the window curtain to.

Night fills the room; a gleam of ruddy hue
Flickers on polished wood, and firelight play
Of fitful light throws into shadowy view
Thine armchair, standing empty all the day;
I gaze in darkness round me and before,
Striving to see, yet failing to discern
The shadowy walls and curtains; but again,
And wistfully again my dim eyes yearn
To thine accustomed empty chair—I fain
Would see thee where I shall not see thee more.

I HIDE my sorrow from my dearest friend,
Sorrow for the love that was so fair,
And that it is my boast I still pretend,
Nor say: "A reed, it broke in the ruthless
air."

When I see him come, his greeting I evade,
And when he speaks of thee, my vague reply
He takes for love, abashed, yet unafraid.
My soul is weak with striving to supply
My mind with wit to defer the fated day
When he must know the truth; of thee I speak
In happy tones that sobs would fain betray;
I fear to tell him of our fate so bleak,
Of my ruined heart so taken by surprise;
I fear to see the pity in his eyes!

TO her low questions she asked a reply,
With grieving hint of her most secret
fears;

I heard within her voice a muffled sigh,
And saw her dear eyes bright with wistful
tears.

I spoke then; that she still had naught to dread,
How she had heard a whispered word of hate,
And taken for the truth the lies that spread,
As echoes in the hills reverberate;

I spoke of faith that still abides with us,
Of weariness the wasted months bestow,
That she alone was my felicity,
That 'tis insane to think a shadow thus,
In sweeping by our love, could wound it so;
And something in her soul, too, spoke for me.

BUT she had come with pitiless decree,
That love itself must cease this very hour,
Within her anguished eyes I seemed to see
A will that drew from love its new-found power.
Down in her quiet heart there seemed to be
No light of hope that pity might disclose,
As though from out her soul's profundity
To her dear lips the hated word arose.
Then blank despair took hold upon my heart,
I saw indeed that all must come to naught,
Even our shattered hopes, the noble grace
Of love that can but deathless pain impart;
Again her hands in last farewell I sought,
And we were clasped in silent, long embrace.

O MOMENTS deep with the infinity
Of God-like joy that seems thus to
arise,

When I hold thee close in my arms and see
The light of love again within thine eyes!
For her dear eyes, so sad with sudden grief,
Had kept their tears, and, taken by surprise,
Could not conceal their joy at this relief,
And her voice died in long, quiescent sighs.
We stood, in silence, near the willow tree,
Whose kindly shade our hearts have known so
well,
And on her forehead, pale and wrought with
pain,
That seemed to trust my manhood pleadingly,
My lips, still trembling with the sad farewell,
Placed the long kiss that brought us peace
again.

REVERIES

FROM the first trembling, hesitating word
Of a lover's shrinking modesty,
To those unbridled ones that Beauty stirred
Within the last, fierce-burning ecstasy,
From doubt to pardon that o'erwhelms all fear,
The language that Love bears is infinite;
And more than man must he be who could hear,
And paint in words the myriad forms of it.
No poet yet has all its might possessed,
Tender and sad, bitter-sweet, distressed,
From the soft-breathed vows that seem to
blend
Eternity with words of briefest fire,
From the low sigh of newly born desire,
To the deep cry wherein all love must end.

WHERE do they go who march in tears despairing?

Those with clenched fists and hoarsely sobbing breath?

Those, with hands joined on high, where are they faring?

And those, with wounded sides, as pale as death?

Those with radiant smiles despite their sighs?

They who dance in time to cymbal's beat?

And those with song and laughter in their eyes,

Smelling the flowers they strew about their feet?

Their shifting column moves without respite,

The tortured now are seized with swift delight,

The joyous for their smiles must soon atone.

Where do they go? To carry all the tears,

Of passion's torments, ecstasies and fears,

Upward, to mighty Love's eternal throne!

THIS little silver lamp whose flame hath
known

Our swift ecstatic hours, oh place it close
Beside thee there, where thou shalt lie alone,
Within the tomb, sweet perishable rose!
Across the twisted iron bars that spell
Thy name in scrolls, shall linger its dim light
In quietness ; and that it may burn well
Let oil replenish it by day and night.
Then, when Creation's veil of years is rent
And thy long sleep is shatter'd, and thou hast
Wide, eager eyes unclosed, as in the past
The lamp shall speak to thee of passion blent
With peace, and thou shalt lean to me at last,
And for my kiss thy heart shall wait, content.

THE early loves are naught but fitful gleams
Of mirrored fire, the momentary glow
Of an unformed, imperfect heart that dreams
Confusedly as yet; nor can it know
That supreme, eternal love that fires
Those hearts that rise, in long unequal strife,
Above defeated hopes and mute desires
That stamped on them the cruel design of life.
No love is real but of achievèd souls,
In whom the might of destiny unrolls
The stronger faith of their maturity,
Whereby from careless youth at last they
gain
A love of grave and tender surety,
And force to love that has won strength from
pain.

BEFORE THE GRAY WATERS

HOW soft the brooding sea appears to-night!

The whole day long its misty, grayish shield
Has caught the sudden shafts of golden light
That skies of veinèd pearl seemed loth to
yield;

Then suddenly these skies were rent anew,
And the dim, pensive sea, so sad and gray
Took on a light of softly purple hue
That o'er all with caressing touch did lay;
Beyond the sun, there in that glorious land
A mighty feast it seems they now command,
From which a ray of such soft flame does leap
To strew with roses the high-towering crest
Of every cloud that floats in luminous sleep;
Ah, if with such calm days our life were blest!

AND still thine eyes are wet with shining
tears,

Eyes of a dreamer, eyes that are my dream:
Alas, my well-beloved, the fiery gleam
Of the armèd angel's sword thy tired heart
sears!

He watches, and forbids us through the years
The Garden of Joy; if he should ever deem
Us worthy, O wistful Eve, how will it seem
To wander there marked deep with the mark
of tears!

Shivering elms and willows make a sighing
Of shadowy leaves, now rising and now dying,
By the complaining winds so stripped and torn;
Beloved, they are the nests of love forlorn!
Then wherefore wouldest thou, dear, give over
crying?

Can love be where no marks of tears are born?

CLOSE up the book for we have read too long—

Our hearts are brimming with its beauty, dear,
Its consecration of a love. Forbear,
Lest tortur'd heart-strings break beneath the song.

The sounds of such sweet verses well belong
To such an evening, wistful, wide and clear—
Like bitter myrrh upon the flames that sear
Our breasts, smoulders the beauty of this song.
Come! let us go and see the sun sink low,
Proudly veiling himself in mist, as might
Some noble, stricken warrior. Even so
Our proud hearts bleed to death, my love; ere
night

Shall close about us, come into the glow,
Come out into the velvet evening light.

SOMETIMES of life's captivity we tire,
The load of duty, law's severity,
When airy chains encircle our desire,
And love awaits the word to set it free;
As captives let their dearest wishes range
Far from the walls whereto their bodies cleave,
We follow—when no breeze is there to change
The limpid beauty of the God-sent eve—
We follow silently the lonely shore
And give ourselves to thoughtful dreaming
o'er,
A reverie of being that empowers
Our souls to wing in freedom, in nuptial flight,
To gardens where grow plants of pensive
light,
When heaven puts its night of clust'ring
flowers.

AND we were seated on the old stone pier,
In silence: I felt the pressure of your
hand;

The dusk was falling, and we sought to hear
The sea's complaining on the dim-lit strand:
"The waves are sobbing out their dull despair
To the rocks, as the tide draws them far away,
They have lost them now forever, the flood
shall bear

Other waves on-climbing in new array:
See how they draw from off the long'd-for reef:
Hear the human torment in their cry,
The last adieu of their low-murmuring grief!"
I felt the trembling of your hand reply,
Your face I lifted to the light above,
And saw you weeping too, O wistful love.

WHEN, after long and weary months
apart,
We two for one short hour again shall meet,
In desolate autumn forests, heart to heart,
Or on deserted windy shores, in sweet
Renewal of our vows, you ask, Sweetheart,
That while I seize upon the instants fleet
And fair as flowers that flowerlike must depart
When Time decrees, you ask that I repeat
In that one perfect hour how I have lived,
And in what hope, after what goal I strived,
What labor have accomplished or what prize.
Oh, what avail my life so marr'd, amiss?
What would'st thou have me see beyond thine
eyes,
Or utter with these lips that thirst to kiss?

OUR love has known so much of sacrifice,
So many of its fondest hopes resigned,
Far back has left the stately edifice
Builded of its dreams, when fate was kind ;
So many dawns has seen with hope anew,
So many days to nights of sadness wane,
So much of grief has seen its joys renew,
So much has strived, so much desired in vain ;
And now before it lies such desert land
Of barren rock and gloomy, sunless shore,
Where aught of joy or love's delight is
bann'd,
That if, from the dark cloud that glowers near,
A voice should cry: "Your bliss is here no
more!"
We should but shrink in long-awaited fear.

WE followed the gray waters, wistful friend,
The long gray waves, whose murmurs grew less loud
As the sea sank to sleep at day's sad end;
The golden yellow sun athwart a cloud,
Glanced on the shadowy surface of the bay,
Touching the topmost naked cliff above;
We followed the gray water's gentle way,
The slow and plaintive waves, O sorrowful love.
Then passed a sweetness from thy soul to mine,
Thy soul where joy yet has an air of sorrow,
Thy soul that suffers, yet does not repine
Because Hope keeps no promise of the morrow,
Thy soul resigned to its own noble sorrow,
Of which this golden eve is the ensign.

A GAINST the dense black of the stormy
sky

A white-winged petrel swept in circles swift
And wild, as though it madly sought a rift
In the enclosing darkness; Winds, near by,
And far away, with many voices pled,
In long, lamenting cries, now shrill, now low—
The ghostly voice of unremembered woe,
The moaning wail of the unburied dead.
The reeds were shivering in the fog that lay
Over the land and sea, while, pitiless
And fierce, the wind shattered the waves to
spray.

Beneath this iron sky, no hope could last
Within our hearts—only the bitterness
Of our own kisses, whipped by winter's blast.

THE SACRIFICE

I

IF but our hearts obeyed a selfish lore,
Together we should flee, and hide our love
'Mong girdling hills, or on some sun-lit shore
Whose waves reflect the kindly skies above;
And we, thus lost in some old town that stands
Beside a lake where quiet beauty lies,
Or in some hamlet flanked by shining sands,
Would turn our exile into paradise.
And there, forgetful of our anxious past,
I'd see thee mine, to cherish and adore,
I'd see thy happy, wistful eyes impart
A love still deeper than the grief we bore,
And, like a desert wand'rer, quench, at last,
The thirst for thee that burns my wearied
heart.

II

I DARE not tell thee of my new-born dream,
Lest my indignant heart dash it to death
Against the stones of shame, so it blasphemeth
No more the spirit of love with love's own
breath.

How can I ask of thee what blemisheth
Our love in yielding, since love doth redeem
Us from our former selves and severeth
Our souls from evil that the flesh would scheme?
How can I ask that thou forget, indeed,
The house wherein thy children's lives shall
bloom,
Wistful for mother-love, nor intercede
For thee, but judging thee to shame and doom
Cover thy face and leave thee, in a tomb
Of silence, burying thy name and deed.

III

AND if in a rash hour I spoke to thee,
To thee, who hast so long and nobly tried
To keep the law of thy maternity—
To win more love that thou mayst better
guide—
Who, by the magic of thy smile, dost gain
Their youthful hearts to lead with brooding
care
Toward that protecting love that thou dost
bear
To every creature suffering unjust pain;
Thou who, in their young life, the dawning of
Their souls, dost sow the seeds of loveliness
That will repay the gift with greater love;
If, in a moment of forgetfulness,
I dared to show thine own fate's enmity,
With what reproach thy gaze was fixed on me!

IV

I SEE by thy wan face, thou see'st by mine,
That both know well the law that holds us
fast,

Revealèd now when the dear hope is past
That my life might, one day, unite with thine.
We must submit—with courage of despair—
This pride of ours, oh may it now uphold
Our hearts, in this last weary fight to bear
The anguish added to our grief of old!
This love of ours, that lived so valiantly,
And triumphantly with its desire did cope,
Convinced by this swift grief that it must
give

Its life that it may find eternity,
Under the wreckage of its cherished hope,
Shall die as nobly as it once did live.

O THOU belovèd, goal of my desire
By that star trembling in the skies
that fade,
By these long waves flushed with the day's last
fire,
I say, thy duty thou canst not evade.
Deep in our shrinking hearts we both know
well
That naught can give us power to repeal
The harsh decree we can no more conceal,
That we must part in endless, sad farewell.
Alas, forgive me that I breathed aloud
This word that seems to wither and lay waste,
As with a glowing brand, our menaced love!
It was to spare thy lips, so pure, so proud,
That I forced mine to be the first to taste
This bitter chalice, God-sent from above.

VI

COME, put thine arms about my neck and
bend
Thy head upon my shoulder, unafraid;
Dost thou recall, when love we thought must
end,
How thus we stood within the willow's shade?
But then it was, beneath the breaking light,
The kiss of love for promised paradise;
This eve it is, before a dawnless night,
The kiss of love for love's own sacrifice.
I see no term to this long trial of ours.
It is itself the reason that empowers
This love to live upon its own mishap
And of it make a crown to glorify;
It cannot pass till love itself does snap,
And both of us know well this shall not die.

I

WE are here, we two, in the empty church,
alone;

Like thieves we slipped in, quietly, unseen,
Past the dim portal, over floors of stone
Where sleeps the sunlight mellow and serene.
It is thy wish to make a sacrifice,
To yield thy fragrant heart, broken by years,
Even as the Magdalen laid her precious spice
In fragments at His feet, mixed with her tears.
Let it be as thou wilt, dear love. Yet stay—
Before thou stand to make this holocaust
Of living miseries, cast thou away
All that is left to love, nor heed the cost;
Drop in the humble poor-box all that's thine
Of joy, the golden ring that marks thee mine.

II

ON the altar where our hopes, new-blown
and sweet,

Were laid, the bread and wine of our despair
Must be set forth. Here, at the end, we meet
To consecrate with ritual and with prayer
Renunciation. Let one chalice bear
The blood of our two hearts, and for the
wheat,

Tears and unleaven'd hopelessness we share
In holy, still communion, bitter-sweet.
Before the crucifix of Christ whose face
Is starlike in the gloom as in the Vast
Of endless death, we shall no longer kneel,
But cling to one another in a last,
Insatiate, heart-wrung, agonized embrace,
Set on Renunciation as a seal.

III

BY our first glance beneath the chestnut tree,
By those first vows my trembling heart yet feels,
By that first kiss, and these that now must see,
How death upon our love resistless steals ;
By the dark forest paths, the hills, the bays
Whose shining sands were witness of our joy,
By instants swift and long, familiar days
That gave your soul to me without alloy ;
By rays that fall upon His cross up there,
This sorrowing God, with whom your prayers dwell,
And by my honor as a man, I swear
My love for you is great, and pure, and true,
And deep as is our woe at this farewell—
'Tis love alone that makes me part from you.

IV

PERHAPS it is decreed that nevermore
May I look on you, O beloved eyes ;
Through the long weeks, the months, the years
there lies
A bitterness, O eyes that I adore.
How many times, since you revealed her soul,
My yearning ones have followed where you go
Across majestic skies where white clouds roll,
Or on the still, green woodland there below.
How often have I seen, as in a mist
Of tenderness, your glance brood over me,
Now blue as is the cornflower in the grass,
Now somber, shadowed, like an amethyst,
As 'cross the depth of your tranquillity
The thought of long farewell did swiftly pass.

A NARROW strip of sky with scatter'd stars
Shows through the closing door—and she is gone.
The light fades from the pillars; darkness bars
The aisle, as shadows creep back one by one.
That is the sound of the closing door—farewell!

I am alone, alone, and shall be so
Henceforth. Oh, to sleep as sound and well
As in your beds of clay, ye dead below
The meadow-grass! My heart sinks down at length
In ruin on itself; what, in my strength,
A high Renunciation seem'd, is Loss,
Void, unredeeming loss! I leave the dark
And empty church, abandoned to the stark
And tortured form that hangs upon the Cross.

VI

O GREAT and sorrowful sea, thy restless waves
Under the moistened glance of millioned spheres
Send forth low-murmur'd sighs, but earth en-slaves
Thee, as thy churnèd spray toward heaven up-rears ;
O great and sorrowful sky, thou dost unveil,
Over the sobbing billows' mournful sigh,
The tearful eyes of thy dark, nightly pale
When 'cross the face of ocean no clouds lie ;
O ye, who thus for untold flight of years
Across the ether's bitter desolation
Reach forth those yearning souls of yours,
souls shorn
Of any hope for your love's consummation,
It seems, this eve, that in my heart are born
All of the sea's low sobs, the stars' dim tears !

MOURNING

WHERE art thou?" cried she on a lonely
shore

Where willows bent their boughs in mournful
grace;

The shining tears fell down, her fingers o'er,
As she stood with hands press'd against her
face.

And he, too, wandering in a doleful land
Where the long reeds are sighing on his path,
And sobbing waves reach forward to the
strand,

Cries, "Where art thou?" and wrings his hands
in wrath.

The lingering echoes of their searching cry
Meet in the air, and mingle but to die
In a long plaintive murmur, sadly sweet;
But they, divided by a strip of land,
Find searching vain, and are forever bann'd
From seeing more, nor can they hope to meet.

I

O NATURE; thou with countless forms replete,

In the ever-shifting pageant of thy day,
Our hearts may find a honey bitter-sweet,
Strangely combined with gladness and dismay!
Where are those days, within thy vast confine,
When I could hear naught but a bird's clear
song?

A hyacinth, immeasureable and divine,
Seem'd in the sky its youth still to prolong;
And over all, where'er I looked I seemed
To see rays softer than I ever dreamed
Around about the swaying roses fold;
And every being quick with zestful life;
I saw alone the threads of silk and gold
That run throughout this dismal human strife.

II

BUT since my soul its weight of sorrow bore
My eyes are opened: in the darkening sky
The shining flower of heaven is no more,
The morning rays have ceased to beautify.
In the world bound about with grief and fear,
So full of ruined nests and hearts in twain,
I see the ruthless clasp of woe adhere
To every being, suffering unjust pain.
I see that grief springs from eternal law;
I see long torment hid in every joy,
The wither'd petals in every flower I saw;
And the end of Time that must destroy
All but the proud ensigns of Death's array,
For whom Life has prepared its long'd-for
prey.

THERE is a pitiless reef of memory
Whereon my blind and mangled heart is
blown;

A year ago to-night you vowed, with me,
To love no more, to live and die alone.
Day, by the savage darkness overthrown,
Bleeds out her life, as though in agony,
In the crimson West; while drearily makes
moan

The North Wind on the troubled waste of sea.
Here on this cliff, drenched with the spray,
forlorn

With clamorous cry of gulls blown in to shore,
Shall I watch out the night, till storms give
o'er,

And skies are torn to shreds and winds have
ceased;

Till haggard, gaunt and blind, disconsolate
Morn

Drags herself, weeping, up the desolate East.

I

JUST as my sorrow lies at my life's core,
Thy grief dwells in the wounded heart of
mine;

And as my grief shall bleed forever more,
So down beneath shall bleed the pain of thine.
And when my grief would have surfeit of woe,
There dawns within an anguish more remote,
Of which mine seems but echoes, faint and slow,
As in this halting verse they dimly float.
But sorrow such as this no words can tell,
It lies beneath my sobs, within the whole
Of this my weary being long distressed—
It swells within the chasm of my soul;
This grief of my long sorrow now must dwell
Deep within me, ever unexpressed.

II

AS one who on the edge of some dim lake,
Whose waters from the nearby woods as-
sume

The swarthy hue, heeds not the laws that make
The place so heavy with the dread of gloom,
Sometimes my own grief only do I know,
Nor deem the thought of thee can form a part,
I think it is alone from out my heart
That surges this infinity of woe;
And I forget, or seem to, all thy pain,
Thy firmer love and thy fidelity;
Surprised that any soul should thus contain
Unwearied power for endless grief, I see
That 'tis the thought of thee and pain of thine
That swells obscurely from the depths of mine.

ACCEPTANCE

WHEN, to my quiet room wherefrom I see
Gray wastes of barren plain where the
wind weeps,
The groping winter twilight softly creeps,
I brood upon the pictured face of thee,
That seems, as darkness grows, to take on
grace
Of piteous, speechless meanings, as the pale
Eurydice yearned mutely while the veil
Of death swathed her in silence; so thy face,
White amid hungry shadows gathering fast
And closing over thee, grows luminous
And bathed in tears, until it sinks at last,
Drowning in darkness. Then, against the
bars
Of the window I lean and marvel, gazing thus
At the faint, perpetual trembling of the stars.

THE steeds enraged that the dawn doth lead
With reins of burnished gold she doth ex-
cite

To leap across the sky in maddened speed
And gallop through the scattered shreds of
night.

And night, surprised in flight too long delayed,
Is rolled beneath their burning hoofs and there
Lies shattered, bleeding, and the blood-red
shade

Is caught and shed through heaven everywhere;
But soon from out this red and tortured mass
The purest rays of morning light shall shine.
Is there not one of you, O bleeding hearts,
Upon whom duty's mighty weight doth pass
And turns to prayer those sighs and pains of
thine,

And from thy grief a burning faith imparts?

A DREAM that followed on our sad fare-well,

Showed you to me against a sky of blue
That soared in depth on liquid depth and fell
Sheer to the margins of a sea that drew
Long draughts of azure from the sky. To
tell

Your robe's clear color were to name the hue
That loves in freezing glaciers to dwell;
Above the golden gorgon's head that drew
Your robe together with its twisted face
Of agony, your eyes were wells of grace.
And when my hands you mutely filled with
showers

Of fresh forget-me-nots, as though with years
Of memories, I bent to the sweet flowers
And crushed them to my eyes to hide the tears.

MAY it be—should fate grant that we meet
again—

Within some wood deep-veilèd from the sun,
The time when sadly autumn has begun
In the high trees, disconsolate, to complain ;
When slowly, one by one, the searèd leaves
Are drifting through the chill, fog-laden air,
To form below their cloth of gold that cleaves
To the damp earth, awaiting, cold and bare.
Sometimes in such despoilèd wilderness,
Where autumn shows the lonely nests on high,
A few pale sunbeams fall like gentle rain
On tardy buds to give a soft caress,
Or on a flaming red-breast perched nearby ;
'Tis in such place that we must meet again.

GO! thou hast triumphed, O my noble one!
From the stern love that bleeds within
thy soul

Shall come a fragrance, as the years pass on;
By which thou shalt be cured and made whole.
Thy children then shall grow between us two,
Their lives, like a wall turned toward the light,
Shall rise—a curtain, thus to hide from view
The untold blackness of my weary night;
And less and less shall thy thought dwell with
mine,

Where stricken love must pine without relief,
And to its own low questions make replies;
The first confusèd words, the lights that shine
From out a little grandchild's baby eyes
Forever then shall cover thy long grief.

O MEMORIES that in this verse I close,
 You that I preserve, O withered flowers,
For you retain some perfume yet of those
Green places where you grew, and dusky
 bowers,
You are but a handful of remember'd hours
Gathered from gardens where sweet revery
 grows,
A single hidden branch, where cluster showers
Of blossoms of past joys, forgotten woes.
To the great happiness that my heart bears
Your joy but as a dry, pressed bud compares
To flowerful meadows where the birds are loud;
And all your sorrow is to my long grief
Of heart, but as the wand'ring withered leaf
To the deep forest's desolation proud.

Frederick P. Vog

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